

What Made Dulles Say It

American reactions to Mr. Dulles's "brink of war" statement have been more hostile than published comments suggest. His critics, indeed, are likely to press home the attack on him. In particular:

A—General Bevell Smith—who put in his resignation as Assistant Secretary of State before the 1954 Geneva conference on Indo-China but was persuaded to stay on to see through the crisis—is furious at what he regards as Mr. Dulles's rewriting of the history of the episode. He may well break silence to contradict the State's version of Britain's "failure" to support the American threat to intervene in Indo-China.

B—Senator Humphrey of Minnesota, who wanted to disprove Mr. Dulles's assertions by publishing transcripts of what he said in closed sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was dissuaded from doing so by the Democratic leader, Senator George. But Senator Humphrey may well use a paraphrase of Mr. Dulles's story in a speech in the Senate. The testimony is believed to contradict Mr. Dulles's assertion that it was agreed and certain that Quemoy and the Mains were to be held against Communist attack.

It is now clear that Mr. Dulles had no intention of deliberately reopening old wounds between himself and Sir Anthony Eden, particularly on the eve of the Prime Minister's Washington meeting with President Eisenhower. The article in *Life* which aired Mr. Dulles's views was originally mooted several weeks before it appeared in print, in a discussion between the Washington correspondent of *Life* and Mr. McCordle, the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. Mr. McCordle probably did not find out when it was to be published and failed to realise that if it appeared just before the Prime Minister's visit, it might be interpreted as a State Department "wedge" between the allies. In fact, the text of the article was not cleared with the State Department before publication.

Four factors impel Mr. Dulles to make such statements:

A—His love of theorising. The Secretary of State is very fond of coming out with academic generalisations about the principles of diplomacy. His assertion that to get to the brink of war without becoming involved in one is "the necessary" is a typical Dullesism. He has been intensified by the comment made by some critics that his foreign policy is essentially a continuation of his predecessor's. He believes that he

has analysed what he regards as the inherent weaknesses of Mr. Acheson's policies, and that whereas they resulted in war in Korea, his own policy has preserved the peace. He therefore used the *Life* article to expound the theories about diplomacy that he has been building up.

NEW STORM ON DULLES'S HEAD

The irony of this is that for the past year the criticism of the Secretary of State—which rose to a peak after the Dien Bien Phu and Formosa episodes—has been dying away. Except for his tactless description of Goa as a "Portuguese province", in his joint statement with the Portuguese Foreign Minister, and his failure to control the Chinese Nationalists over the admission of new members to the United Nations, it looked as if the opposition attacks were ~~being~~ out from lack of ammunition. Consequently, neither Mr. Stevenson nor Mr. Harriman was able to press home his criticisms of the Administration's foreign policy with great effect. But now Mr. Dulles's ruminations about his conduct of events that are past and done with has brought down a new storm on his head.

B.—His pride in technical expertise. Mr. Dulles often makes in public the kind of statement that he would expect to receive from an expert adviser in international law, without seeming to realize that because he is Secretary of State his words will be interpreted as considered American policy. One example was his patient explanation that in international law he was quite entitled to call Goa a Portuguese province—without considering the point that the Indians were bound to interpret this reference as supporting Portugal's claim to maintain the *status quo* in Goa.

C.—His fear of China's next move. He is reported to fear that the crisis over Quemoy and the Matsus will flare up again in the spring. He may therefore have been tempted to remind the Chinese of the perils of launching an attack and to try to persuade them that an invasion of the offshore islands would be just as dangerous as one of Formosa itself. The Americans have recently drawn attention to the fact that the jet airfield and invasion centres opposite Formosa are nearing readiness.

D.—Mr. McCordle's influence. Mr. Dulles is on very close terms with Mr. Carl McCordle, the deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, with whom the *Life* correspondent planned his article. Mr. McCordle is one of the very few people to whom, in time of stress or indecision, Mr. Dulles likes to unburden himself, and he is perhaps the only one who dares to contradict the Secretary of State when his mind is apparently made up. Consequently, since Mr. McCordle had given his blessing to the article, Mr. Dulles may have been less cautious about checking it and thinking of the effect of its timing than he would otherwise have been. Mr. McCordle himself seems to have approached the problem of timing rather casually.

From Geneva to Jakarta

The suspension of the Dutch-Indonesian talks in Geneva has implications far beyond the relations between the two countries. What is at stake is the future direction of Indonesia's foreign policy. Prediction, however, is hazardous, because—
There was nothing in the manner in which the talks were suspended to prevent their resumption.